

Chapter Two

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter restates the principal challenge of this Plan, and presents basic goals and objectives. The remaining chapters provide the rationale for these goals and the specific recommendations necessary to implement the objectives of this chapter.

ACHIEVING THE PROPER BALANCE

How highways are used, and the improvements they need change over time. However, local governments and MDOT have interrelated responsibilities for land use and highway decisions. This creates special challenges when it comes to meeting competing interests in highways and abutting lands. Following is a concise statement of the principal challenge of this Plan.

To identify improvements to US-2/US-141/M-95 and local regulation of access to the highway that maintain an appropriate balance between safely meeting the mobility needs of through travelers and local highway users in a manner that reflects mutual respect and recognition of the important role that local governments and MDOT each play when making decisions that affect the corridor. In taking the above actions, it is important to always factor in the needs and impacts of each decision on all highway users, with special consideration given to buses, pedestrians, bicyclists, and intersecting trail users.

GOALS

There are five principal goals inherent in achieving the proper balance described above:

1. Maintain and improve (where feasible) the traffic carrying capacity of the highway.
2. Improve traffic safety.
3. Maintain the local economic development benefits of the highway.
4. Maintain a coordinated mechanism for future planning and zoning along the highway.
5. Maintain a coordinated mechanism for state investments in the highway and local infrastructure investments along the highway.

OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives consistent with these goals are listed below:

1. Periodically identify the cause of existing or projected congestion along the highway and following examination of alternatives, select improvements that safely preserve the traffic carrying capacity of the highway.

2. When selecting from among alternative capacity improvements, give special consideration not only to cost-effectiveness, but also to uniformity in design so driver confusion is minimized.
3. When selecting from among alternatives, give special consideration to those that help preserve the investment in existing and planned improvements to the road, such as those that incorporate access management into the design.
4. Design and implement improvement projects in a way which minimizes disruption not only to existing traffic, but also to abutting residences, businesses and other actively used lands.
5. Plan traffic capacity improvement projects to roads managed by MDOT sufficiently far ahead, and in a manner which permits local governments and the County Road Commission, to most effectively coordinate associated infrastructure improvements on intersecting roadways and to accommodate cost-effective utility expansions or replacement.
6. Implement only traffic or intersection improvements that are consistent with this Plan.
7. Periodically update this Plan to ensure that it continues to guide coordinated land use and highway improvement decisions along the corridor.
8. Ensure that land planned and zoned for intensive economic development activities is both well suited for such use, and that such use is compatible with uses on adjoining lands and the physical characteristics and capacity of the segment of the highway providing access.
9. Ensure that prior to approval of intensive new land uses along the corridor, that appropriate traffic impact studies are done and review is coordinated between MDOT, the County Road Commission, the local government in which the development is proposed, and affected units of government in adjoining jurisdictions.
10. Ensure that prior to site plan approval for any land use along the corridor, that the proposed site plan is first reviewed by the Corridor Advisory Committee so that consistent access management decisions can be made along the corridor.
11. Encourage all local units of government along the corridor to adopt and thereafter maintain (with a thorough review at least once each five years), a future land use plan, master plan or comprehensive plan of future land use that serves as the basis for future zoning and infrastructure decisions along the highway, and is carefully coordinated with similar plans in adjoining jurisdictions.
12. Encourage all local units of government along the corridor to maintain (with a thorough review at least once each five years), a zoning ordinance which appropriately manages access to the highway consistent with regulations based on MDOT's model regulations and those of adjoining jurisdictions, and is consistent with the communities future land use, master or comprehensive plan.

13. Encourage all local units of government along the corridor to prepare and thereafter annually update a community wide capital improvement program that lists proposed infrastructure spending by location, cost, source of revenue and timing, with a special focus on coordinating such spending plans with MDOT and the County Road Commission where US-2/US-141/M-95 and county roads are concerned.
14. Encourage MDOT to plan future road and access management improvements along the highway in a manner that is consistent with this Plan, that permits local input prior to final decision-making and that serves as a model of intergovernmental cooperation.
15. Educate citizens, businesses and property owners about the basic contents of this Plan and seek their input prior to adopting any Plan updates.

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